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By Email

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Dear Jason & Charlotte,

Thank you for your letters of 30 January 2026 headed "PAY IMPOSITION – CEASE AND DESIST".

You will be unsurprised to learn that there are a number of points in that letter on which I take issue. As you are aware from the contents of my letter of 27 January 2026, it is the ECIA's position that its 'full and final offer' was made on 19 January. It was also clear that you yourselves were in agreement that the offer was indeed the final one as you both agreed to recommend it to your members which you then did in clear terms in the correspondence that you sent to them inviting them to vote for acceptance. It is unfortunate that you chose not to inform your members of the conditional nature of the offer that was made namely that if it was not accepted, the position would revert to the offer of 3.6% that had previously been put forward verbally at the concluding meeting on 21 November 2025 in writing in my letter of 7 January 2026 and again verbally in our telephone conversation on 16 January as the final offer being put forward on behalf of the ECIA negotiating team. Had you done so, it seems likely that the voting outcome may have been different.

In section 145B terms, starting first with the offer of 19 January clearly not made outside the scope of collective bargaining – quite the opposite, it was made as the result of such bargaining and was then agreed by both Unions as an offer that should be accepted by your members and as already stated, the offer was made on the basis that there would be an additional pay increase based on a period of industrial harmony. The suggestion of a 4% increase was of course put forward by Jason himself during the course of the telephone discussion that we had on 16 January as an offer that would be recommended by yourselves.

It was of course open to your members to reject the offer which they have now done. But the effect of this is that both the offer of 3.6% made in November 2025 and January 2026 and the alternative offer of 4% (plus a further 0.5% subject to conditions) have now both been effectively rejected, and a point reached at which collective bargaining has been concluded and an impasse reached. It is the ECIA's firm view that there is no prospect of a collectively agreed deal for 2026 and an impasse has now been reached.

In terms of the implementation of the 3.6% pay award, as my letter of 27 January indicates, our intention was to work with all parties – which includes yourselves – to implement this with effect from 2 February 2026. From the ECIA's perspective, there are no further steps that can or could be taken in terms of collective bargaining regarding the 2026 award and we are keen that the pay increase should reach employees' pay packets sooner rather than later. The implementation of that award was therefore not for the purpose of avoiding collective bargaining as in short, there was no collective bargaining to avoid on this issue. It had reached its conclusion on 19 January 2026, following which your members rejected the final offer that had been made to them and recommended by yourselves.

Moving forward, as set out in my letter of 27 January, the next step in terms of collective bargaining is to move to negotiations for 2027, with the possibility of reaching an agreement for a multi-year pay deal. We sincerely hope that positive steps relating to this can begin at the Extraordinary NJC meeting you have called. For the avoidance of doubt, we do not see that meeting as a further stage in the collective bargaining process relating to the 2026 pay award and your suggestions that the ECIA has acted in breach of section 145B or any collective process – or operated a cartel of some sort – are entirely rejected.

Yours sincerely



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